

The Role of Regional Cooperation Efforts for the High Seas of the Southeast Atlantic

Dialogue Workshop organised by the STRONG High Seas Project and its regional partner the Abidjan Convention Secretariat

16-17 November 2021



Workshop Participants © STRONG High Seas Project, 2021

The workshop agenda can be found in Annex 1.

The workshop presentations [can be found here](#).

For more information about the STRONG High Seas project, please visit: <https://www.prog-ocean.org/our-work/strong-high-seas/> or contact: stronghighseas@iass-potsdam.de

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Workshop summary

The [STRONG High Seas](#) ('Strengthening Regional Ocean Governance for the High Seas') project with its regional partner the [Abidjan Convention Secretariat](#) co-hosted the fourth Dialogue Workshop titled "The Role of Regional Cooperation Efforts for the High Seas of the Southeast Atlantic", which took place online on 16-17 November 2021. This workshop was part of a series of workshops organised under the STRONG High Seas project in the Southeast Atlantic region to bring together stakeholders to discuss the status and challenges of global and regional ocean governance, as well as foster exchange and build new networks. The workshop brought together around 50 participants from member States of the Abidjan Convention as well as global and regional organisations, scientific institutions, academia, and civil society.

Key messages

- The **Dialogue Workshop offered a space** for Abidjan Convention member States, the Abidjan Convention Secretariat, sectoral organisations, academia, and civil society **to present their work and discuss critical aspects relevant to marine areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ)**, particularly to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in these areas. Workshop participants highlighted **the importance of organising these Dialogue Workshops** in the Southeast Atlantic region.
- Many of the key provisions in the draft agreement currently being negotiated under the United Nations for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ (BBNJ Agreement) are still in brackets and further negotiations are needed to finalise the agreement and to ensure that it is ambitious and robust. While COVID-19 has caused a delay in the BBNJ negotiations, **there remains significant opportunities for States and stakeholders, including in the Southeast Atlantic region, to be involved in the BBNJ negotiations.** The next intergovernmental conference (IGC4) is tentatively planned for 7-18 March 2022.
- Workshop participants highlighted that there is a **strong need for African States and stakeholders of the Southeast Atlantic region to enhance efforts** regarding the ongoing BBNJ negotiations and issues related to ABNJ, including considerations for the future implementation of the BBNJ Agreement. To support this, **awareness raising, and political engagement are essential** through all areas of society.
- Participants **emphasised the current and potential future role of the Abidjan Convention and its Secretariat as a key convener of States and for coordinating efforts in the Southeast Atlantic region.**
- There is also an important need for initiatives, such as the STRONG High Seas project, to continue **to support capacity building efforts in the Southeast Atlantic region and help to enhance Abidjan Convention member States' participation and role in the BBNJ negotiations and in ABNJ issues** more broadly.
- Conservation measures, such as area-based management tools (ABMTs), are appropriate for use in ABNJ and could be underpinned by other tools, such as Marine Spatial Planning (MSP). However, **capacity building, political will and stakeholder interest to ensure compliance with legal regulations**, through for instance the use of Monitoring, Control and

Surveillance (MCS) tools, **must be enhanced** to ensure their full implementation and contribute towards the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ.

- Participants also highlighted that **there is an important role for regional cooperation to support and underpin conservation efforts in ABNJ** – through e.g., establishing shared regional goals and strategies, ensuring the exchange of knowledge and information, creating regional platforms for negotiation and conflict resolution, and addressing transboundary challenges, such as fishing or pollution.
- Workshop participants **recognised the progress of the STRONG High Seas project and stressed the important opportunity for States and stakeholders in the Southeast Atlantic region** to participate in the project and its planned activities beyond this Dialogue Workshop.

Outlook and next steps

This Dialogue Workshop was the fourth in a series organised in the Southeast Atlantic region under the STRONG High Seas, a project funded through the German International Climate Initiative (IKI). The fifth Dialogue Workshop of the STRONG High Seas project is planned for March 2022.

Until the end of the project in May 2022, the project plans to publish a report with proposals for concrete conservation measures for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ as well as a report on role and importance of integrated ocean management for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ. Further planned publications include a report assessing capacity needs to implement conservation measures and ensure integrated management in ABNJ, as well a report providing reflections on the role of stakeholder engagement and participation in the STRONG High Seas project.

Stakeholder participation will continue to be promoted in the project by strengthening links between the Southeast Pacific and Southeast Atlantic regions, as well as with other relevant marine regions. To this end, interactive inter-regional meetings will be organised by March 2022. In addition, other webinars and capacity-building workshops will be organised in late 2021 / early 2022. Abidjan Convention member States and stakeholders in the Southeast Atlantic region are invited to participate actively in the project, by contributing to and reviewing technical documents and scientific assessments, participating in expert meetings, dialogue workshops, capacity building workshops as well as other project events organised during the BBNJ negotiations in New York. More information about the BBNJ negotiations and their relevance to the region can be found on the [High Seas Abidjan Convention website](#) and more about the project can be found on [the project website](#) as well as through [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Summary of the presentations and discussions

Welcome

Mr. Ben Boteler, co-lead of the STRONG High Seas project and based at the [Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies \(IASS\)](#), welcomed the participants on behalf of the project and expressed his hope that the STRONG High Seas project in general and this workshop in particular can make collective strides towards marine conservation. He highlighted the numerous regional and global initiatives in ocean governance that are underway, including the ongoing BBNJ

negotiations in which the fourth and possibly final round is planned for March 2022, and emphasized the importance for stakeholders of the Southeast Atlantic region to actively participate in these discussions. He highlighted that the main objectives of the workshop were to discuss with participants the current state of the BBNJ negotiations; provide a setting for member States of the Abidjan Convention and other stakeholders in the Southeast Atlantic region to exchange in regard to lessons learnt and best practices in regional ocean governance; and present and discuss STRONG High Seas scientific findings and planned assessments.

Session 1: Update from ongoing activities and BBNJ Negotiations

Update on the STRONG High Seas project activities relevant to the Southeast Atlantic region and the BBNJ Negotiations

Mr. Ben Boteler (IASS) gave an introduction about the importance of areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) and the ongoing BBNJ negotiations. The ocean covers 71% of planet, of which 46% are ABNJ. ABNJ are legally divided into the high seas and the Area. The high seas are defined by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as the water column beyond the limits of national jurisdiction while the Area is defined as the seabed, ocean floor and subsoil thereof located beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. ABNJ are full of marine life and provide important ecosystem services, which are increasingly threatened. Pressures from human activities are not limited to coastal areas but extend to ABNJ. The whole planet is connected, driven by ocean currents and the migration of animals, and as a result, activities in coastal zones impact ABNJ and vice versa. Effective conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ will contribute to a healthy ocean and global wellbeing of current and future generations.

The STRONG High Seas project carries out transdisciplinary scientific assessments to provide decision-makers, both in the target regions (the Southeast Atlantic and the Southeast Pacific) and globally, with improved knowledge and understanding on conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ. At the regional level, decision-makers benefit from improved knowledge and understanding about the gaps, challenges, and opportunities in the legal and governance framework; current status of, as well as key pressures and threats on marine biodiversity in ABNJ; the links between marine biodiversity in ABNJ and human wellbeing; as well as possible options for the management of human activities impacting marine biodiversity in ABNJ and the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of these management approaches.

Both the Southeast Atlantic and Southeast Pacific regions are characterized by important oceanic currents contributing to high marine productivity. Working through regional organizations, States in these regions have recognized the need to strengthen ocean governance at this level for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, including in ABNJ. Together with stakeholders in both target regions, the STRONG High Seas project will co-develop and propose targeted measures to support the coordinated development of integrated and ecosystem-based approaches for ocean governance in ABNJ.

A list of webinars and scientific reports published under the STRONG High Seas project to date can be found in Annex 2.

Update on the BBNJ Negotiations & other global policy processes

Mr. Jean Kenfack (Ministry of the Environment, Cameroon) provided an overview of the current status of the BBNJ negotiations, including the draft treaty text, which will be, once it is adopted, the third implementing agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of

the Sea (UNCLOS). The BBNJ negotiations formally started in September 2018 following a 2017 UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution to start the negotiations towards a BBNJ Agreement. The final session of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC 4) to negotiate this agreement is planned for March 2022. Inter-sessional discussions have taken place online since September 2020. It remains unclear whether States will be able to finalize the negotiations during the next IGC session, so further sessions might be necessary.

The ongoing negotiations aim to have a binding legal instrument under UNCLOS for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ. This is part of an ongoing process towards global integrated ocean governance. The UN started work in the 1960s that led to the adoption of UNCLOS. Based on a 2004 UN Resolution, the UNGA created a working group to identify topics that would be negotiated as part of the BBNJ Agreement. The working groups were comprised of a large number of countries and led to the establishment of the Preparatory Committee that worked in 2016-2017 on the elements of the text to be negotiated.

These agreed upon elements make up what is commonly referred to as the “Package Deal”: Area-based Management Tools (ABMTs), including Marine Protected Areas (MPAs); Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAs); Marine Genetic Resources (MGRs), including questions on access and the sharing of benefits; Capacity Building & Transfer of Marine Technology (CB&TT), as well as general provisions and institutional arrangements.

Going into the fourth round of negotiations, there are still a lot of open questions about the agreement text that need to be resolved before an agreement between States can be made. When considering the whole of the ocean, including national waters, the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ is already partially considered within the framework of Regional Sea Conventions (RSCs) and sectoral agreements. There is therefore a challenge to articulate a legally binding agreement at the international level as the new BBNJ Agreement should not undermine the legal authority of existing multi-lateral agreements which also apply to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ.

There is agreement that ABMTs, including MPAs, should be based on the best available science, the precautionary approach, and the ecosystem approach. In terms of the ABMT process, it is not clear as to whether only State parties to the BBNJ Agreement will submit proposals or if other stakeholders can be involved. There are currently no provisions on interim or emergency conservation measures. In the current draft text, a Conference of the Parties (COP) will be established, but the scope of its mandate is not yet fully fleshed out. There is, for instance, no provision in the current draft agreement text that empowers the COP to adopt measures when other competent organisations may not.

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) are also an important tool in the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ as it helps to identify activities that will have impact on marine biodiversity and can support with the identification of conservation or management measures. But the BBNJ Agreement should also aim to target cumulative impacts – i.e., impacts created by pressures from multiple human activities. Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs), which take a more holistic approach by evaluating multiple projects within an area can be useful to create a more complete understanding of potential impacts on marine biodiversity in ABNJ.

In regard to Marine Genetic Resources (MGRs), one question that remains open, is what type of resources should be included– should it only be what has been collected from the ocean, or should resources include those that have already been researched? Those countries that have advanced technology regarding MGRs are reserved about sharing knowledge or research on MGRs. Another open question is whether the BBNJ Agreement will take into account MGRs to be exploited in the future (after the BBNJ Agreement is signed) or those that have already been collected, i.e., retroactively. African States consider MGRs as 'the Common Heritage of Mankind' – a legal principle which means that all MGRs and the socioeconomic benefits which they create should belong to all States. This implies that there must be some mechanism to share and distribute benefits created from MGRs to all States. To date, this is a sticking point in the BBNJ negotiations, and there is no clear way forward as to what this mechanism should look like.

In regard to capacity building and technology transfer, this is included in UNCLOS already, but this is not really taken up because of intellectual property issues. For some countries, such as African States – there is sometimes a lack of knowledge or capacity to actively participate in the BBNJ negotiations or discussions surrounding these issues. This package element is therefore highly relevant for these States, which are interested in ensuring that the BBNJ Agreement supports them to become more engaged in these issues. Whether capacity building and technology transfer is made mandatory or voluntary is a sticking point in the discussions. Part of the issue is that States do not want to create additional burdens on the private sector, for which they would need to partner. Those countries that are already engaging in high seas research and activities may support other countries to participate, but many countries do not have the capacity to do this on their own, and so their scientific knowledge remains limited. Along these lines, African States have also requested the establishment of a special trust fund to support them in participating in future BBNJ discussions.

There is also a need for increased coordination and collaboration if the objectives of the BBNJ Agreement are to be reached. This includes considerations such as creating a coordinating body to provide oversight on what is happening at e.g., the regional level. Tools such as Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), or others, could support a coordinating body at the global level. However, amongst States, there is still a lot of disagreement on how such a body should be structured and what powers it should be given.

Many of the key provisions in the draft BBNJ Agreement are still in brackets and further negotiations are needed to finalise the agreement and ensure that it is ambitious and robust. While COVID-19 has caused a delay in the BBNJ negotiations, there remain significant opportunities for States and other stakeholders, including in the Southeast Atlantic region, to be involved.

Discussion

- Looking at the three IGC sessions that took place – there is progress, but the disagreements at sectoral level are still there and there is a lot remaining to be done. Building consensus within likeminded (e.g., African) States is needed.
- With the development of this new legally binding BBNJ Agreement and the issue of not undermining existing agreements, perhaps there is an opportunity to capitalize what is already available and make the BBNJ Agreement more robust.
- There are already many rules and regulations under UNCLOS, but they have not been able to comprehensively protect and conserve marine biodiversity in ABNJ, particularly

in the water column. The entire water column is not covered in existing regulations as well as the functionality of the ocean to absorb carbon, etc. So, it isn't a question of ignoring existing regulations, but it is about filling the gaps on what has not been covered by UNCLOS.

Session 2: Update from the Southeast Atlantic region

Discussion with States and stakeholders on ongoing and upcoming activities in the Southeast Atlantic region

This interactive session provided a space for participants to provide input on two specific questions.

Question 1: What new activities have you or your organisation, ministry, department, etc. undertaken in the last year related to the conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment, including in ABNJ?

Participant responses:

- Published a paper on polycentricity – about how organisations cooperate with each other, globally to locally. It is often assumed that organisations all get along, but coherent cooperation is not a given. There is a need for mechanisms to bring people together and address conflict, power imbalances and asymmetry (e.g., north-south, sectoral etc.). All have an interest in a healthy, productive, resilient ocean – so there should be opportunities to find ways to align. This will take work after the BBNJ Agreement is signed.
- The Abidjan Convention is helping contracting parties to create MPAs. A few countries (Gabon, Senegal), who have experience on this issue, and along with countries like Ivory Coast who had no MPAs, have worked together and this cooperation has led to the establishment of the first MPA in Ivory Coast that was declared in 2021. There is now work to create a network of five MPAs in Ivory Coast as well as to create more MPAs in other countries, e.g., Liberia and Ghana. The region is also looking at the possibility of establishing transboundary MPAs.

Discussion:

- Q: Do non-state actors have a role to play in the development of MPAs and how can non-governmental organisations (NGOs) get involved with the work of the Abidjan Convention Secretariat, including making the activities of the Secretariat more widely known (ex. such as designing a project in Nigeria to identify where MPAs are needed)? How can non-state actors engage with the Abidjan Convention Secretariat on this and promote the work that is happening as well as gain visibility?
 - A: The Abidjan Convention Secretariat has a mandate to work through governments' ministries but can also collaborate through the ministry with NGOs. For example, in the Ivory Coast, an NGO has been selected to implement a project to protect mangroves. Through this approach, the Secretariat is trying to collaborate with as many NGOs as possible. For the establishment of MPAs in Ivory Coast, the Secretariat is working with NGOs on building a surveillance network for MPAs. NGOs are often recognized as more present (on the ground impact) within the country than the government.
- Q: There is often a language barrier to work with the Abidjan Convention Secretariat – how does it manage these differences so everyone can engage?
 - A: Meetings of the Abidjan Convention are done in both English and French.

- Q: How does the Convention facilitate multi-country, cross-sectoral work? How can NGOs work on transboundary issues?
 - A: The government is the contact point for the Abidjan Convention Secretariat in each country, and State ministries need to help to ensure proper collaboration when it is relevant for the issues that they are working to address. The Abidjan Convention Secretariat is also trying to put together a network of NGOs to deal with transboundary and cross-sectoral issues, e.g., for protection of marine species, as well as establish some collaboration mechanisms, such as a platform to get the NGOs to work together.

Question 2: Looking forward, what important steps and/or activities do you identify as essential to conclude the BBNJ negotiations and successfully implement the BBNJ instrument in the Southeast Atlantic region?

Participant responses:

- There is a proposal made for the Abidjan Convention COP13 to extend the mandate of the working group on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ. This should help to encourage countries in the region to get more involved in the BBNJ negotiation process. The main goal is to have a protocol for the countries of the region to engage with the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ and to ensure that the interests of the region are considered in the BBNJ negotiations.
- It will be important to include more groups in the discussions, including the private sector – they are the ones active in ABNJ, but they are currently not part of the discussions. The awareness and understanding are not there, and this is important for the successful implementation of the future BBNJ Agreement. Also, States do not always have the capacity. Extending the mandate beyond State actors to involve the private sector and civil society actors is important.
- There is a general need to increase awareness, particularly about the BBNJ negotiation process. Capacity building and awareness are important. The media can help bring these issues to national awareness.

Session 3: STRONG High Seas project work and other ongoing research
Presentation on the conservation measures report

Dr. Shannon Hampton (IOI-SA) introduced Session 3 on the conservation measures report, that is being developed by the STRONG High Seas project, stating that the key take home message from the assessment is that marine biodiversity in ABNJ has not been spared impacts from anthropogenic activities. Ecological connectivity means that coastal waters and the livelihoods they support can be critically affected by human activities in ABNJ. But it is important to keep in mind that we are not managing the marine environment, we are managing the human activities happening in the marine environment.

To date, there are several sectoral measures to support conservation efforts in ABNJ. For example, the IMO manages shipping and uses Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs) to provide special protection for areas that are recognised to be vulnerable. However, there are no PSSAs in the Southeast Atlantic region. The International Seabed Authority (ISA) uses Regional Environmental Management Plans (REMPs) and Areas of Particular Environmental Importance

(APEIs) to provide a basis for monitoring the marine environment on the deep seabed. There are no seabed mining activities in the Southeast Atlantic region.

Fishing is the most common activity in ABNJ. The FAO has adopted various binding and non-binding instruments that encourage sustainable management and discourage Illegal, Unregulated, and Unreported (IUU) fishing. The Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) are mandated to focus on management and the conservation of fisheries resources. RFMOs have a wide range of management measures that they can use, such as Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs).

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) could play an important role as a cross-sectoral management tool and support conservation efforts in the region. To date, there are no MPAs established in ABNJ of the Southeast Atlantic. However, the BBNJ Agreement should play a pivotal role in establishing cross-sectoral MPAs, globally and in the region.

There also exist resources for identifying key areas and that can support conservation efforts in ABNJ, but which have no legal status. Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) can support conservation in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and in Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) planning processes and inform formal protection processes. Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) indicate special areas in the ocean that serve, in one way or another, to support the healthy functioning of the ocean and the many services that it provides. There are also Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs). Other options to support conservation measures include: 1) Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) (mostly in Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) and might take some time before this will apply to ABNJ), 2) EIAs (still debate on how this will be implemented) and 3) Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS).

Key messages:

- Marine biodiversity in ABNJ continues to be at risk from anthropogenic activities.
- Sectoral measures exist but are currently not applied within ABNJ of the Southeast Atlantic.
- RFMOs have a key role to play in protecting the ecosystem and managing resources in a sustainable way.
- Established science-based methods to identify MPAs (e.g., EBSAs, Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), IBAs, IMMAs) should be used within the region.
- Cross-sectoral cooperation is crucial.
- Innovative management and conservation measures should be considered, such as mobile MPAs.
- The conservation measures need to be built on:
 - MCS
 - Financial mechanisms
 - Capacity building in the region
 - Transparent, science-based decision-making
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Clear objectives and a management plan, including evaluation
 - Conflict resolution and communication
 - Integrated, ecosystem-based ocean management approach

Discussion

- Q: How do we engage our own government and the stakeholders to protect parts of ABNJ? It is very important that we are connected with the international community, so we get all the latest information.

- A: You could involve NGOs and work together with the Abidjan Convention Secretariat. A lot of it requires advocacy. In South Africa, we are working towards the Convention on Biological Diversity goal of 10% MPAs in our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). We had about 0,5% MPAs established, and we went to 5% in the last couple of years. It required identifying areas that are important for conservation. It was a slow process, but it was a very important one. Academics and other colleagues need to start working on it as soon as possible. It is very important to be transparent and to engage stakeholders as early as possible. We are obliged to meet international commitments to protect certain parts of our EEZ.
- Q: I work in an NGO and often, I am not called upon to contribute to these kinds of discussions. Now it was because of COVID and this meeting is online. We must talk to the relevant stakeholders to take it forward. For instance, we started talking to professors and fisheries agencies. What can we do to engage? We signed so many documents and commitments, but more than often we do not meet them. Can the Abidjan Convention Secretariat also engage with non-State actors?
 - A: In South Africa, the NGOs and the non-State actors play a very big role in creating MPAs. The Abidjan Convention is an inter-governmental process where the States are the ones that have the competence. There are examples elsewhere where NGOs were formally accepted as part of the process, ex. for the RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands.
- Q: We see an increase in unregulated captures of marine mammals. How can we do something about this?
 - A: It is a tough question, and I am surprised to hear that there are active captures of marine mammals.

Presentation on deep-sea mining in ABNJ and links to BBNJ negotiations

Pradeep Singh (University of Bremen) explained that deep-seabed mining is the exploration and exploitation of mineral deposits at depths greater than 200 metres. The broad definition says: “all solid, liquid or gaseous mineral resources”. But there are three main mineral deposits that are of interest: polymetallic nodules, polymetallic sulphides and cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts. They are located in seabed areas within national jurisdiction (continental margin of 200 Nautical Miles or more) as well as seabed beyond national jurisdiction (the Area). The Area and its mineral resources are the ‘Common Heritage of Mankind’, which in legal terms mean that it belongs to mankind as a whole – and benefits are to be shared equitably.

There are numerous environmental considerations regarding and (potential) impacts from deep-sea mining:

- Deep-sea minerals take centuries to form.
- Organisms are dependent on the minerals (nodules).
- Hydrothermal vents and seamounts are full of life.
- Deep ocean is not directly exposed to human disturbances.
- Contemporary mining methods are highly destructive.
- Current knowledge indicate restoration is not feasible.
- Noise/light impacts on marine life/mammals are not known.
- Impacts are 3-dimensional and will spread quite a distance.
- “Benefits” of natural capital are not yet quantified:
 - Climate regulation and carbon storage;
 - Sustenance of the marine food web;
 - Provision of key ecosystem services.

Access to deep-sea minerals is coordinated via the International Seabed Authority (ISA), which is an international organisation established under Part XI of UNCLOS and has a mandate over mineral resources of the Area. The ISA is to act 'on behalf of mankind as a whole' and all States parties to UNCLOS collectively form the organisation. It has three primary organs: the Assembly, the Council and the Secretariat. Ten members of the African Group and five Members of the Abidjan Convention are currently part of the Council.

Current and ongoing developments at the ISA:

- The ISA 'turned' 25 in 2019.
- Most mining exploration contracts are in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone, which is known to be full of polymetallic nodules. There is a regional environmental management plan covering this region.
- 31 countries have been awarded exploration contracts by the ISA to date.
- In the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, there have been some exploration contracts awarded.
- In the Indian Ocean, there have been some exploration contracts awarded to China, India, South Korea, and Germany.
- Draft exploitation regulations: work commenced in 2014 at the Legal and Technical Commission (LTC). Text negotiations commenced at the Council in July 2019 and resumed in February 2020. The pandemic struck in March 2020 and has halted progress since.
- In June 2021, the Republic of Nauru invoked a treaty provision known as the "two-year rule". Section 1(15) of the 1994 Agreement Relating to the Implementation of Part XI of UNCLOS requires the ISA Council to accelerate and make progress with the exploitation regulations, i.e., to complete elaboration and adoption within two years (which is by 9 July 2023), failing which, the Council would still have to consider and decide upon any pending application for exploitation despite the absence of regulations. This led to the question about what needs to be done now to meet the deadline. Exploitation regulations must be adopted by consensus at the Council and the existence of one formal objection could result in a deadlock: Section 1(15) addresses that legal gap. Contrary to some media reports, this does not mean that commercial mining will commence in 2023. An application must first be submitted.

Concerns of the African Group at the ISA:

- Environmental concerns
 - Rights and interests of adjacent coastal States: transboundary environmental harm (African Group Statement, 2018).
 - Established scientific evidence shows that mining activities will harm coastal communities and affect the marine food web.
 - Growing evidence indicates a strong ecological connection between what happens in ABNJ and African States in particular.
- Economic concerns
 - Financial terms of exploitation contracts: Do the financial terms of permitting deep-sea mining justify the potential environmental, social, and economic risks?
 - Mechanisms for benefit-sharing: What kind of mechanism will ensure the equitable distribution of benefits gained from deep-sea mining?
 - Compensation for land-based mining developing countries - since deep-sea mining will be a form of 'competition' for terrestrial mining, how to compensate developing countries whose economies are reliant on land-based mining. A recent ISA study identified that 13 States will be particularly economically affected if deep-sea mining is to take place, with eight of them located in Africa: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Gabon, Madagascar, Mauritania, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

- Equity concerns
 - Transfer of technology
 - Was a key requirement under UNCLOS; however, diluted through the 1994 Implementation Agreement.
 - Without technology transfer, African States are hindered from participating in the Area.
 - Capacity building and training programs
 - There are training programs at the moment, however, there are many issues with the current approach (African Group statement, 2019).
 - For example, very limited training on how to conduct and evaluate/review environmental assessments.
 - Operationalization of 'the Enterprise'
 - Envisioned under UNCLOS as the 'mining arm' of the ISA that will conduct mineral exploration and exploitation on behalf of humankind.
 - The Enterprise was established under UNCLOS, however, the 1994 Implementation Agreement postponed its operationalization (and it remains the case until today).
 - This is seen as the most effective way for developing countries to participate in activities in the Area.
 - African Group statements since 2017 have insisted that the Enterprise be operationalized as a matter of priority.

Links to the BBNJ negotiations – since both legal regimes apply to ABNJ, there is a clear overlap:

- Environmental harm from deep-sea mining is 3-D (and hence includes the water column)
- Potential conflicts in the use of the marine environment: 'reasonable regard' (Article 147 of UNCLOS).
- Open questions:
 - Status of MGRs? Deep-sea mining will result in biodiversity loss. It may also impede access to MGRs, if ISA has issued mining contracts.
 - ABMTs (including MPAs) established through the BBNJ process: will this bind the ISA? ISA has in the past issued an exploration contract covering an area identified as EBSAs through the CBD process.
 - Streamlining environmental objectives and the EIA process? ISA is developing its own sectoral objectives and EIA process, which will apparently be inconsistent.
- ISA Secretariat attends the BBNJ negotiations – repeated emphasis on 'not undermine' caveat.

Conclusion/key messages:

- The deep ocean remains poorly understood, but what little is known indicates that humankind is heavily dependent on the deep ocean. Strong evidence linking deep ocean to human needs. Deep ocean continues to sustain our lives.
- Short-term economic gains from deep-sea mining may not justify long-term natural capital loss. Especially if only a few actors stand to benefit while environmental burdens are felt by developing countries. Need to embrace the precautionary principle and polluter-pays principle to internalise all externalities.
- Knowledge has progressed from when UNCLOS was negotiated but still lacking greatly.
 - Contemporary knowledge must be considered when making present day decisions.
 - Consequently, there have been increasing calls for a moratorium/pause until concerns are addressed.
 - The ongoing UN Decade for Ocean Science is an excellent opportunity to close knowledge gaps.

- Connection between the BBNJ process and the work of the ISA is very obvious. However, based on current progress, there is a growing risk that both may not be in sync with each other.

Discussion

- Q: In respect of technology transfer, what are the prospects? ISA has so many documents in respect of deep-sea pollution and presently we are aware that many countries are polluting the ocean in respect of deep-sea pollution. Why has there been no steps taken against countries that have polluted the ocean in respect of deep seabed mining?
 - A: The pollution from seabed mining is going to be significant, but the ISA has been developing regulation and in terms of exploitation they are developing standards and guidelines that miners must abide by when mining in the Area. There is an acceptance that there will be environmental harm following deep seabed mining. There is no agreement on what kind of harm can be accepted. At the moment, no action has been taken for any pollution activities. There have been 3 small-scale tests so far. A few private companies from developing countries have contacted developed countries to partner with them on deep-sea mining, but very often they do not have sufficient oversight and control over these contracts. That is why the African Group wants to have an oversight mechanism.
- Q: I just came back from COP26 in Glasgow and you all know that the ocean has found its way in the COP26 Outcome Agreement. Article 6 on loss and damage has been watered down. Looking at the BBNJ negotiations, do you think it is easy for African countries and developing countries at large to make their voices heard?
 - A: At the moment, the approach they are taking is that they put the financial costs low. Many are arguing that the environmental impacts will be much higher; so the price of deep seabed mining should be much higher. The ISA should adopt one small contract first, so we can see how to ensure the conservation of the marine environment.

Session 4: Interactive session on the role of regional cooperation for ABNJ

Carolina Hazin (BirdLife International) provided an overview of the session and highlighted the role of regional cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ. The specific objectives of this interactive session include to: identify opportunities for cooperation in regional and global policy processes; and support the preparation of a report on cooperation and integrated management. The participants provided feedback on a number of questions in plenary.

What, if any, issues or challenges in ocean governance for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Southeast Atlantic could be better addressed through strengthened regional cooperation?

Participant responses:

- There is an issue of getting the experts and correct information at the right time. It is important to avoid reinventing the wheel – experts that have been involved in policy processes can help to avoid this. Some countries might have experts in certain topics, and not others. Need to share knowledge.
- There is a need for better information sharing and shared goals across countries, but also national ministries and institutions.

- Ocean governance is a negotiation process which tries to build consensus, but whose priorities get preference – it is an evolving process. Compromise might be needed. Some points might be missed, but at least there is a way forward and there is opportunity for evolving in the future.
- In terms of sharing knowledge at a local level (e.g., coastal environment) improved low-cost stewardship of local resources. When local communities have capacity to develop solutions and ideas, they spearhead the conservation processes.
- Regarding the BBNJ Agreement – whatever is decided, it should not undermine the mandate of existing organisations. But the definition of 'not undermining' is not clear – hopefully it includes cooperation. It will be essential to work together to achieve respective goals and common goals of protecting natural ocean resources.
- Concerning the disadvantages – organisations and institutions are not stable, which leads to interruptions to policy and governance processes that sometimes must be restarted. Stable institutions are important to ensure progress towards a shared and common agenda.
- It is important to avoid existing mandates undermining what the BBNJ Agreement will articulate.
- Identifying challenges can lead to progress as a first step towards managing the identified issues. For example, if consensus is not reached – use conflict resolution. Manage the risks by knowing the disadvantages. There are reports and documents and examples of lessons learned of conflict resolution and other's successes and failures. Use this information to improve process.
- Involvement of grassroot organisations in the transboundary context of problem analysis and co-designing of solutions as well as implementation of initiatives.
- Industrial fishing always requires cooperation between two neighbouring countries whose Exclusive Economic Zones (marine boundaries) border each other and is especially true for the tracking of fishing vessels beyond the jurisdiction of one country into another.
- Maritime transport of goods (transport sector) with interests in several countries would benefit from increased regional cooperation.
- Major issues include illegal fishing and pollution, as well as national administrations which do not have the capacity to address these challenges.
- Problems can be addressed through cooperation, public and private, as well as shared technology and resources.
- The aim should be to improve the management of a whole ecosystem, instead of bits and pieces - so all have opportunities for shared resources and benefits.
- There is a need to promote ocean literacy so that all stakeholders are informed of challenges and opportunities.
- All issues and challenges could be better addressed through better cooperation. There are already lots of good initiatives and other high-level research and politically focused programmes e.g., AIR Centre, Belem/Galway statements, etc. need to be better integrated in terms of information sharing, avoiding duplication of activities, and supporting African States capacity building programmes.

What are the advantages or disadvantages of adopting an integrated approach to achieve marine biodiversity conservation goals – consider integration with the private sector, including financial sectors, and cross-cutting issues like climate change?

Participant responses:

- Advantages - we have no choice; we must integrate and may have to consider a governance structure for this process of integration and the major issue of “not undermining”. Disadvantages – it will be difficult to integrate because it will be contentious to agree on who are eligible stakeholders.
- Advantages – the integrated approach means understanding and concern about the importance of marine biodiversity conservation will lead to increased long-term socioeconomic benefits and support to livelihoods, so it is progress towards finding a sustainable solution. Disadvantages – leads to compromise and sometimes does not resolve the core issue of specific problems.
- Advantages - standardisation of approaches to implement conservation goals; (hopefully) leads to better information sharing and shared goals. Disadvantages - not being able to reach consensus on topics or stalling of decisions to continue business as usual, whose priorities get preference.
- The only disadvantage would be NOT to adopt an integrated approach.
- There are far more advantages than disadvantages to adopting an integrated approach.
- An integrated approach could lead to improved governance of resources across the region, economic gains, reduced poverty, and international relations.
- Disadvantage is only that it takes time to integrate, and some compromises might be needed. But it's worthwhile if we want to move away from short-term solutions.

What actions are needed to mainstream biodiversity into the private sector, including financial sectors, and taking into account cross-cutting issues such as climate change? Consider elements such as legal aspects, scientific knowledge exchange, political decision making.

Participant responses:

- We need a set of regulations to be in place, but this requires a strengthened dialogue between the private and public sectors.
- A suggestion could be to create a sustainable development platform where ministries from various sectors come together to discuss sustainable development issues – but it would need to include private sector stakeholders. There are business and biodiversity platforms being established in many countries (CBD, etc.) and these also have very positive outcomes.
- There needs to be win-win options between private sector and conservation. There are public-private sector interventions e.g., oil and gas industry providing research data. These are ways to navigate out of difficulties and challenges in conservation.
- There needs to be platforms for conflict resolution with checks and balances, standards etc., as well as ways to monitor these standards to see if they are effective. Government has an important role to develop ocean business alliance and create the space to have these conversations. We can learn from the private sector too and work towards common goals.
- There is a need to move away from carbon emissions because of consumer pressures. This shows the power of consumers and the importance of societal participation. There are interdependencies – motivations might be different but can work towards common goal and can work in parallel to that – recognizing the value of biodiversity.
- It is a state policy to integrate conservation aspects into the private sectors. They are aware that conservation also plays an important role in the sustainability of their activities. The private sector can also contribute financially to restoration.

- Currently creating standards for safeguarding the natural environment is in vogue, and the application of all standards to any sector forces the private sectors to consider biodiversity.
- There is a need to integrate biodiversity conservation into national policy, including through biodiversity conservation education and training.
- Evidence-based and clearly communicated regulations as well as the enforcement of these regulations by all States is essential. This should include penalties for not abiding to a policy/law.
- There is a need for an open and common platform where actors can dialogue, negotiate, and reconcile competing interests with the objective of ensuring the sustainability of marine ecosystems for society.
- Such conversations are happening in the private sector and financial institutions - there just seems to be a gap in how to bring them into the conversation with research and civil society. Companies have to report of environmental safeguards to shareholders and stakeholders are increasingly aware of environmental and social impacts - but it feels like parallel processes are happening, so we need to try bridge that gap.

Wrap Up of the workshop and outlook

Mr. Ben Boteler (IASS) began his presentation by offering several general reflections on the Dialogue Workshop. He noted the widespread recognition of the importance of conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ, and the importance to engage further in debates at the national, regional, and global level. While there is ongoing research, a robust link between science and policy processes must be ensured. In addition, collaboration, coordination, and communication between sectors are needed. This could be aided by a regional (or inter-regional) mechanism or platform for sharing knowledge and data.

Upcoming publications of the STRONG High Seas project include a report on recommendations for conservation efforts in the Southeast Atlantic being led by Shannon Hampton as well as an assessment led by Carolina Hazin on the potential role of integrated ocean management in ABNJ. Furthermore, [a website providing information on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ](#), including the BBNJ negotiations, has been developed by the STRONG High Seas project (available in English and French).

Representatives of the STRONG High Seas Project closed the workshop by thanking participants for their effort and commitment, expressing hope about the progress of existing initiatives, and once again stressing the importance of further advancing the sustainable use of the high seas.

Annex 1: Workshop Agenda

Day 1 – 16 November 2021	
12:15 – 12:30 Abidjan Time	Online platform open for participants to login Day 1 facilitated by Paule Myriam Bana (Junior Project Officer, Abidjan Convention Secretariat)
12:30 – 12:40	Opening of the Workshop and Housekeeping rules Paule Myriam Bana (Abidjan Convention Secretariat)
12:40 – 12:50	Welcome on behalf of the Abidjan Convention Secretariat & the STRONG High Seas project Abou Bamba (General Secretary, Abidjan Convention Secretariat) Ben Boteler (Co-lead Strong High Seas, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, IASS)
12:50 – 13:00	Workshop objectives <i>Short introduction to the objectives of the two days of workshop</i> Paule Myriam Bana (Abidjan Convention Secretariat)
13:00 – 13:15	Short introduction round in small groups <i>Poll followed by tour de table in small break-out groups</i> Facilitated by Paule Myriam Bana (Abidjan Convention Secretariat)
13:15 – 13:30	Session 1: Update from ongoing activities and BBNJ Negotiations Update on the STRONG High Seas project <i>This presentation will introduce the STRONG High Seas project, the project work to date and plan for the last year of project implementation.</i> Ben Boteler (IASS) Followed by Q&A
13:30 – 13:50	Update from the Abidjan Convention Secretariat <i>This presentation will provide an overview of the Abidjan Convention Secretariat work since the last Dialogue Workshop in February 2021</i> Abou Bamba (Abidjan Convention Secretariat) Followed by Q&A
13:50 – 13:55	Group Picture
13:55 – 14:05	Break (10 minutes)
14:05 – 14:30	Update on the BBNJ Negotiations & other global policy processes <i>This presentation will provide an overview of the negotiations for a legally binding international instrument under the United Nations for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ Negotiations) as well as other relevant global policy processes.</i> Jean Kenfack (Director of Legal Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, Cameroon) Followed by Q&A

<p>14:30 – 15:25</p>	<p>Session 2: Update from the Southeast Atlantic region Discussion with States and stakeholders on ongoing and upcoming activities in the Southeast Atlantic region <i>Workshop participants will be asked to share their views and discuss the following questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What new activities have you or your organisation, ministry, department, etc. undertaken in the last year related to the conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment, including in ABNJ? • If you or your organisation, ministry, department, etc. have been engaged with the BBNJ process to date (including the recent Intersessionals), what key take away messages or lessons have you drawn from this participation, particularly regarding considerations for States and stakeholders of the Southeast Atlantic region? • Looking forward, what important steps and/or activities do you identify as essential to conclude the BBNJ negotiations and successfully implement the BBNJ instrument in the Southeast Atlantic region? <p>Facilitated by Paule Myriam Bana (Abidjan Convention Secretariat)</p>
<p>15:25 – 15:30</p>	<p>Close of day 1 Paule Myriam Bana (Abidjan Convention Secretariat)</p>
<p>15:30 – 16:00</p>	<p>Social event <i>Optional social event for workshop participants</i></p>

<p>Day 2 – 17 November 2021</p>	
<p>12:15 – 12:30</p>	<p>Online platform open for participants to login Day 2 facilitated by Leticia Greyling (International Ocean Institute)</p>
<p>12:30 – 12:40</p>	<p>Welcome and summary of day 1 Leticia Greyling (International Ocean Institute)</p>
<p>12:40 – 13:00</p>	<p>Session 3: STRONG High Seas project work and other ongoing research Presentation on the conservation measures report <i>This presentation will provide an overview of the work of STRONG High Seas on the conservation measures report.</i></p> <p>Shannon Hampton (Program Manager, International Ocean Institute – South Africa) Followed by Q&A</p>
<p>13:00 – 13:30</p>	<p>Presentation on deep-sea mining in ABNJ and links to BBNJ negotiations <i>This presentation will provide an overview of deep-sea mining in ABNJ and the ongoing discussions within the International Seabed Authority, including links to the BBNJ negotiations.</i></p> <p>Pradeep Singh (Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies and University of Bremen)</p>

	Followed by Q&A
13:30 – 13:40	Break (10 minutes)
13:40 – 13:55	<p>Session 4: Interactive session on the role of regional cooperation for ABNJ</p> <p>Introduction to the session <i>This session will introduce the interactive session</i></p> <p>Facilitated by Carolina Hazin (Global Marine Policy Coordinator, BirdLife International)</p> <p>Followed by Q&A</p>
13:55 – 14:55	<p>Interactive session <i>Facilitated discussions will be used to allow workshop participants to share their views and discuss prepared questions.</i></p> <p>Facilitated by Carolina Hazin (BirdLife International)</p>
14:55 – 15:25	<p>Plenary discussion <i>Discussion in plenary</i></p> <p>Facilitated by Carolina Hazin (BirdLife International)</p>
15:25 – 15:30	<p>Closing of the workshop by the Abidjan Convention Secretariat & the STRONG High Seas project Abou Bamba (Abidjan Convention Secretariat) Ben Boteler (IASS)</p>

Annex 2: Participants

Name	Affiliation
Olusola Adeoye	Nature Cares Resource Centre
Ibukun Adewumi	Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP)
Kome Adhekpukoli	Federal Ministry of Justice Nigeria
Fahardine Ahamada ali	direction de la pêche Comores (DGRH)
Anthony Akpan	Pan African Vision for the Environment (PAVE)
Paule Myriam Bana	Abidjan Convention Secretariat
Harry Barnes-Dabban	Ports Environmental Network-Africa (PENAf)
Ben Boteler	Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)
Morgane Bouvet	Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI)
Blessing Charuka	University of Cape Coast, Ghana
Klaudija Cremers	Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI)
Mamadou Diallo	Conservation and Research of West African Aquatic Mammals (COREWAM)
Mohamed DIEDHIOU	Laboratoire d'études et de recherche en politique droit de l'environnement et santé (LERPDES)
Carole Durussel	Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)
Jana Fasheh	Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)
Jean-Eric FONKOU CHANOU	Ministry of External Relations Cameroon
Kristina Gjerde	International Union for Conservation o Nature (IUCN)
Leticia Greyling	International Ocean Institute – South Africa (IOI-SA)
Vikki Gunn	Seascope Consultants
Shannon Hampton	International Ocean Institute – South Africa (IOI-SA)
Stefanie Hansen	Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)
Carolina Hazin	BirdLife International
David Johnson	Seascope Consultants
Lynn Jonas	Nelson Mandela University, South Africa
Jean Kenfack	
Lewis Kihumba	BirdLife Africa
Lucien MALOUEKI	Ministère de la Recherches Scientifique et de l'Innovation Technologique, Republic of the Congo
Hosea Kato Mande	Kaduna State University, Nigeria
Aurora Mateos	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Name	Affiliation
Michael Melato	Transnet National Ports Authority- Cape Town
Lisdalia Moreira	Focal point of the Abidjan Convention, Cape Verde
Lufuno Albert Mudau	South African Maritime Safety Authority
Constance Omagbemi	Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency
Nicole du Plessis	South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON)
PATRICE RATEFIARISON	Government of Madagascar
Frida RAZAFINAIVO	Madagascar National Parks
Pradeep Singh	University of Bremen
Zacharie Sohou	Institut de Recherches Halieutiques et Océanologiques du Bénin (IRHOB)
Matthias Steitz	Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), Germany
Tamara Thomas	Conservation International
Stephanie Waniko	Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMR)
Akanbi Williams	Nigerians Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMR)
Glen WRIGHT	Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDR)
Stephanie Young Adika	Centre for Maritime Law and Security (CEMLAWS Africa)

Annex 3: Selected list of online seminars and scientific reports published under the STRONG High Seas project to date

STRONG High Seas Reports

- Durussel, C., Wright, G., Wienrich, N., Boteler, B., Unger, S., Rochette, J., 'Strengthening Regional Ocean Governance for the High Seas: Opportunities and Challenges to Improve the Legal and Institutional Framework of the Southeast Atlantic and Southeast Pacific', STRONG High Seas Project, 2018, https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Online_IASS_Report_190227.pdf
 - Summary for Decision-Makers, https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Online_IASS_Summary_EN_190227.pdf
 - Résumé à l'intention des décideurs, https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Online_IASS_Summary_FR_190228.pdf
- Wright, G. and Rochette, J., 'Regional Ocean Governance of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction: Lessons Learnt and Ways Forward', STRONG High Seas Project, 2019, https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/STRONG-HS_Lessons-Learnt-Report.pdf
 - Summary for Decision-Makers, https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/STRONG-HS_Lessons-Learnt-Report-Sum_EN.pdf
 - Résumé à l'intention des décideurs, https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/STRONG-HS_Lessons-Learnt-Report-Sum_FR.pdf
- Boteler, B., Wanless, R., Dias, M., Packeiser, T., Awad, A., Yannicelli, B., Zapata Padilla, L.A., Aburto, J., Seeger, I., Hampton, S., Jackson, L., Wienrich, N., Ajagbe, A., Hazin, C., Castellanos Galindo, G.A., Naranjo, L.G., Suárez, C.F., Prussmann, J., Valenzuela, S., Gomez Giraldo, L.S., Higgins, M.L., Contreras, C., Luna, G., Luna, N., Munizaga, M., Sellanes, J., Tapia, C., Thiel, M., 'Ecological Baselines for the Southeast Atlantic and Southeast Pacific: Status of Marine Biodiversity and Anthropogenic Pressures in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction', STRONG High Seas Project, 2019, https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/STRONG-HS_Ecological-Baselines-Report.pdf
- Cremers, K., Wright, G., Rochette, J., "Strengthening Monitoring, Control and Surveillance in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction", STRONG High Seas Project, 2020, <https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Cremers-Wright-and-Rochette-2019.-Strengthening-Monitoring-Control-and-Surveillance-in-Areas-Beyond-National-Jurisdiction-1.pdf>
- Gjerde, K.M., Wright, G., and Durussel, C., "Strengthening high seas governance through enhanced environmental assessment processes: A case study of mesopelagic fisheries and options for a future BBNJ treaty", STRONG High Seas Project, 2021, <https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Gjerde-K.M.-Wright-G.-and-Durussel-C.-Strengthening-high-seas-governance-through-enhanced-environmental-assessment-processes.pdf>
- Spiteri C., Senechal T., Hazin C., Hampton S., Greyling L., Boteler, B., "Study on the Socio-Economic Importance of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction in the Southeast

Atlantic Region”, STRONG High Seas Project, 2021, https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Africa-Socio-Economic-Report_FINAL.pdf

- Cremers, K., Bouvet, M., Wright, G., Rochette, J., “Options for Strengthening Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of Human Activities in the Southeast Atlantic Region”, STRONG High Seas Project, 2021, <https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Cremers-K.-Bouvet-M.-Wright-G.-Rochette-J-Options-for-Strengthening-MCS-of-Human-Activities-in-the-Southeast-Atlantic-region.pdf>

STRONG High Seas Policy Briefs

- Gjerde, K., Boteler, B., Durussel, C., Rochette, J., Unger, S., Wright, G., ‘Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction: Options for Underpinning a Strong Global BBNJ Agreement through Regional and Sectoral Governance’, STRONG High Seas Project, 2018, https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/STRONG-High-Seas-Policy-Brief_Options-for-underpinning-BBNJ-agreement.pdf
- Kludija Cremers, Glen Wright, Julien Rochette, ‘Keeping an Eye on the High Seas: Strengthening Monitoring, Control and Surveillance through a New Marine Biodiversity Treaty’, STRONG High Seas Project, 2019, <https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Cremers-et-al-2019-Keeping-an-Eye-on-the-High-Seas.pdf>
- Gjerde, K. and Wright, G., “Towards Ecosystem-based Management of the Global Ocean: Strengthening Regional Cooperation through a New Agreement for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction”, STRONG High Seas Project, 2019, https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/PB_Ecosystem-based-management_191213.pdf
- Bueno M., P., ‘The Role of Regional Cooperation in Strengthening High Seas Governance: Conceptual Framework and Key Recommendations’, STRONG High Seas Project, 2021, <https://www.prog-ocean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Bueno-M.-P.-%e2%80%98The-Role-of-Regional-Cooperation-in-Strengthening-High-Seas-Governance.pdf>

STRONG High Seas Online Seminars

- STRONG High Seas Online Seminar – [Marine Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction in the Southeast Pacific and Southeast Atlantic](#) (08/2018)
- STRONG High Seas Online Seminar – [Marine Genetic Resources: Building Capacities for Ocean Governance](#) (11/2019)
- STRONG High Seas Online Seminar – [Strengthening Monitoring control and surveillance through a High Seas Treaty](#) (11/2020)
- STRONG High Seas Online Seminar: [Towards a Better Management of Western African Marine Resources: the Role of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance](#) (11/2021)

About STRONG High Seas

The STRONG High Seas project is a five-year project that aims to strengthen regional ocean governance for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Working with the Secretariat of the Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur (CPPS; Permanent Commission for the South Pacific) and the Secretariat of the West and Central Africa Regional Seas Programme (Abidjan Convention), the project will develop and propose targeted measures to support the coordinated development of integrated and ecosystem-based management approaches for ocean governance in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

The STRONG High Seas project has the following overarching objectives:

1. Facilitate the development of improved management approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction in the Southeast Pacific and Southeast Atlantic regions;
2. Identify best practices and provide support to regional institutions and national authorities for implementing existing regional instruments;
3. Develop options for regional governance in a future international instrument under UNCLOS and transfer regional lessons learned to the global level to promote ocean governance.

For more information about the STRONG High Seas project, please visit the [website](#) or contact: stronghighseas@iass-potsdam.de

Partners of the STRONG High Seas project



International Ocean Institute
African Region



Supported by:



Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety

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based on a decision of the German Bundestag